

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In response to the Examiner's Office Action of January 08, 2010 issued in relation to the present Patent Application, the Applicant submits the Remarks below.

Claims 1-9 are pending in the Application. Claim 1 is an independent claim.

Regarding 35 USC 103 Rejections

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Machida (US 7,002,702) in view of Kujirai et al. (US 200/0053295), and further in view of Sekizawa (US 2002/0138612).

Claim 2, 3, 4 and 7 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Machida in view of Kujirai, further in view of Sekizawa and yet further in view of Iizuka (US 6,771,385).

Claims 5-6 and 8-9 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Machida in view of Kujirai, further in view of Sekizawa and yet further in view of Iizuka, and further in view of known prior art.

An important aspect of the claimed invention is that each consumer maintains a record of the total consumption of each resource. The advantage provided by this aspect is that, when a consumer wishes to use any resource, that consumer already knows the total consumption of that resource. That consumption data is received directly from other consumers, not from the common resource(s) or a server associated with the common resource(s).

The prior art references relied upon, individually or in combination, teaches away from the claimed invention.

Machida teaches that one of the PCs serves as a management server and controls device log information. Machida therefore teaches away from the claimed invention in that management of the log information is centralized, compared with the claimed invention where the maintenance of consumption information is decentralized at each consumer. The result of the centralized system taught by Machida is that the respective PCs have to request from the management server the totals before using the resource.

Kuijirai teaches two types of printers, those having a job accounting function, and those without that function. In the event the printer 104 has a job accounting function, that printer accumulates and manages the number of printed pages, paper size, double-/single-side printing, and color/monochrome printing for each user. When the printer is a conventional printer 103, a server 1001 executes a job accounting server application 100, and each client 101, 102 executes a job accounting client application 101e, 102e. The respective job accounting client applications 101e, 102e accumulate usage information of its own client 101, 102, and sends that information through to the job accounting server application 100 of the server 1001 where usage information is accumulated from each user.

Thus, in Kuijirai each printer 104 maintains its own usage information, and then the printer 103 is unable to do so, a server 1001 does it on its behalf. Again, Kuijirai teaches away from the claimed invention where consumption data is maintained by each consumer (ie client) for each resource (ie printer), rather than by the resource itself or a central server as is the case in Kuijirai.

Sekizawa teaches in paragraphs [0144]-[0145] that agent unit 10 gets status information indicating the operation state of each network printer P connected to its LAN 3a and the toner remaining amount, the ink remaining amount, photosensitive drum remaining life, etc. This information is then compiled into a status mail and addressed to console unit 20. Those status mails are routed via mail server 19. In Sekizawa each printer maintains consumption information for that printer only. That information for each printer is then communicated to the agent unit 10, which mails the information to the console unit 20.

Yet again Sekizawa teaches centralizing the accumulation of consumption information at the console unit 20, rather than calculating and maintaining that information at each PC.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the 35 USC 103(a) rejection of claim 1 have been traversed. The 35 USC 103(a) rejection of claim 1 should be withdrawn as claim 1 is allowable over the references as applied by the Examiner. Claims 2 to 9 are dependent on allowable claim 1, and are allowable for at least that reason.

CONCLUSION

Allowance of the present application is respectfully requested.

Very respectfully,



Kia Silverbrook, Managing Director

Silverbrook Research Pty Ltd
393 Darling Street
Balmain NSW 2041, Australia

Email: pair@silverbrookresearch.com

Telephone: +612 9818 6633

Facsimile: +61 2 9555 7762